

Fire Safety for Social Clubs

The recent tragic fire in a Fall River religious club has everyone thinking about fire safety from a new perspective. The cause of that fire, which killed four and injured ten, was a candle igniting flammable decorations.

Flammable Decorations

Places where groups of people assemble are not permitted to have flammable decorations.

Consider using non-flammable decorations such as mirrors, glass, metal, mylar and treated paper.

Keep flammable decorations - paper, wood, cloth, plastic - a safe distance in all directions from sources of heat such as candles, stoves, smoking materials, or heaters.

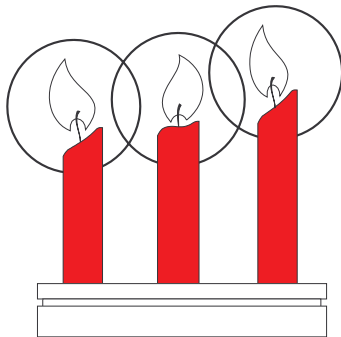
Have breaks in between blocks of decorations, not one continuous display.

Safe Candle Use

Candles are generally not allowed in places where people assemble, but the fire department may permit them for ceremonial or religious purposes if adequate safety precautions are in place.

When allowed by the fire department, use candles inside of a one-foot circle of safety, an area one-foot in all directions free of anything that could burn, such as decorations, curtains that could blow around, other items on a table or stand.

Use a stable metal, glass or ceramic container.



Electrical Safety

Extension cords are intended for temporary use only. If you find your group using them regularly, consider having a licensed electrician upgrade your service. Extension cords can easily be overloaded, and are a common cause of fires.

Keep Exitways Clear

Make sure the pathway to every exit is kept clear. Exits should be clearly marked with lit signs. An emergency evacuation plan should be clearly marked and posted.

Point Out Exits at Every Meeting

Consider pointing out the exits at the beginning of every meeting or function.

Maintenance is Good Fire Prevention

Make sure the fire alarm, sprinklers, fire extinguishers, and kitchen suppression systems are checked regularly by a licensed professional.

Make sure exit signs are lit and test emergency lighting regularly.

Have a professional check out the heating systems once a year and the electrical system every five years.

Contact Your Local Building & Fire Officials

It is important to protect you members and your guests. Contact you local fire and building officials who will work with you to make sure your social club is safe and meets all requirements.

Building and fire officials can advise you on proper classification of your space, smoke alarms, numbers of exits, how the doors should open, sprinklers, kitchen suppression systems, flame retardency on tents and any permits you might need.



FireFACTORS

Office of the State Fire Marshal • Department of Fire Services

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